

# Referral application form to use for the fast-track process

Under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

## About this referral application

This referral application form has been approved by the Secretary for the Environment in accordance with the fast-track approvals process of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (the Act). All referral applications under the Act must be submitted using this form.

We recommend you discuss your referral application and the information requirements with us before you lodge the referral application. Please contact the Fast-track support team on 0800 327 875 or email [info@fasttrack.govt.nz](mailto:info@fasttrack.govt.nz)

**Please provide a general level of detail in your application; sufficient to inform the Minister's decision on the referral application.**

You must use this form to apply for referral applications and complete all relevant fields, even where you provide supporting attachments that are more detailed. Include attachment or appendix numbers in the relevant fields and list the attachments in section 5 of this form.

If the required information and relevant supporting material is not provided, the application will be returned to you as incomplete.

If your application is determined to be complete, and the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) considers that your project may be capable of satisfying the assessment criteria and does not appear to involve an ineligible activity, and you have paid all related fees, charges and/or levies, then we will provide it to the Minister for Infrastructure (the Minister).

Unless the Minister decides to decline the application before doing so, the Minister will invite comments on the application from relevant local authorities, Ministers, administering agencies, identified Māori groups, owners of Māori land in the project area and any other person the Minister decides is appropriate. The Minister may also request further information from you, the relevant local authorities, or relevant administering agencies before making a decision on the referral application.

If the Minister accepts your referral application, then you may lodge a substantive application with the EPA and the substantive application may be considered by a decision-making panel.

## Application fees and Cost recovery

Under the Fast-track Approvals (Cost Recovery) Regulations 2025 (the Regulations), applicants lodging a referral application are required to pay a fee (deposit) of \$12,000 (plus GST), and a levy of \$6,700 (plus GST) to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). The fees are set in

Schedule 1 of the Regulations. These fees must be paid before lodgement of your referral application. If the required amount is not paid the application will be returned as incomplete.

Please note the final costs payable at the referral stage may exceed the referral application fee (deposit) paid. More information about cost recovery under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 is available from [Fast-track approvals cost recovery process](#).

## Submitting your application

You will need to submit this form through our digital Fast-track portal. You will need to receive a link to register/access the portal.

If you need any help with the form, you can call or email us:

- 0800 327 875 (0800 FASTRK) (from within New Zealand)
- email: [info@fasttrack.govt.nz](mailto:info@fasttrack.govt.nz)

### How to send your completed form to us

Use the application portal – you will need to receive a link to register/access: [Fast-track website](#)

## Your personal information

The Ministry for the Environment (MfE) is collecting your personal information for the purpose of administering your referral application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. We will only use the information for the purposes of contacting you in relation to this application.

MfE may provide your application, or details from your application to other agencies or local authorities for the purpose of administering your referral application. If your application is accepted as complete and progresses through the referral process, the Minister may consult with other agencies and groups on your application. This will require the Minister to share the details of your application with the EPA, the Panel Convener, and those groups.

We will store your personal information securely. You have the right to access the personal information we hold about you and to ask for it to be corrected if it is wrong. If you would like to access your personal information, or have it corrected, please contact us at [referrals@fasttrack.govt.nz](mailto:referrals@fasttrack.govt.nz)

## Official information

All information you provide with this application is subject to the Official Information Act 1982 and may be released in accordance with that Act.

## Publishing your application

We intend to publish your referral application on the Fast-track Approvals website.

Any personal contact details in application documents will not be made publicly available. Please provide a copy of the application with all personal contact details redacted.

MfE may also redact certain information from publication in accordance with the Official Information Act 1992. If you think your application contains information which should be withheld, please clearly identify it and provide an explanation as to why it should be withheld.

## Section 1: Applicant details

*A person or persons may apply to use the fast-track process for a project. Where there is more than one person, the referral application must be lodged jointly by all of the persons who are proposed to be authorised persons for the project.*

*If the referral application is accepted and referred by the Minister, the person or persons who lodged the referral application will be specified as the person who is, or the persons who are, authorised to lodge a substantive application for the project.*

### 1.1 Applicant(s) – repeat for all applicants

**1.1.1 Organisation name:** Meridian Energy Limited

**1.1.2 NZBN (optional):** 9429037696863

**1.1.3 Contact name:** Kate Berkett

**1.1.4 Phone:** s 9(2)(a)

**1.1.5 Email address:** s 9(2)(a)

**1.1.6 Postal address (if preferred method of contact):**  
Meridian Energy, PO Box 2128, Christchurch 8140

### 1.2 Agent acting on behalf of applicant (if applicable)

**1.2.1 Organisation name:** GHD Limited

**1.2.2 Contact name:** Amy Callaghan

**1.2.3 Phone:** s 9(2)(a)

**1.2.4 Email address:** s 9(2)(a)

**1.2.5 Postal address (if preferred method of contact):**  
s 9(2)(a)

### 1.3 Finance – Agent acting on behalf of applicant (if applicable)

1.3.1 Organisation name:

1.3.2 Contact name:

1.3.3 Phone:

1.3.4 Email address:

1.3.5 Postal address (if preferred method of contact):

*If you are making this application on behalf of the applicant, please attach evidence that you are authorised to make this application.*

1.3.6 Please direct all correspondence relating to this application (including correspondence from MfE) to:

☐ Applicant(s)

*If selecting Applicant and there is more than 1 person who lodged the referral application, please identify 1 person to receive all correspondence on behalf of all applicants.*

☒ Agent for applicant Amy Callaghan

### 1.4.1 Compliance and enforcement history – repeat for all applicants

1.4.1 Have there been any compliance or enforcement actions taken against the applicant (or if the referral application is lodged by more than one person, any of those persons) under a specified Act definition for either ‘compliance’ or ‘enforcement’?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

1.4.2 If you answered yes above, please provide a summary of the relevant legislation and provisions, and any compliance or enforcement actions, and the outcome of those actions taken under the specified Act against the applicant or applicants, if the referral is being lodged jointly.

Not Applicable

## Section 2: Referral application summary

### 2.1 Project name

*This is the name by which the project will be known publicly. For example - avoid using street addresses, place names, company names.*

## 2.2 Project description and location

### 2.2.1 Provide a description of the project and the activities it involves

*The project description helps us with inviting comments from relevant parties on the application, and publishing information about the application.*

Meridian is seeking approval to apply under the Fast-track Approval Act 2024 for consent to temporarily eased access restrictions on Lake Pūkaki contingent storage. Additionally, Meridian is seeking approval to permanently install rock armoring at Pūkaki Dam to ensure the structure's resilience to wave erosion when operating the lake at lower levels (below 518 mRL). For further information, please refer to Sections 2.1 and 2.2 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

### 2.2.2 Provide a description or map of the whole project area that identifies its boundaries in sufficient detail to enable consideration of the referral application.

*For example, site address(es), certificate of title(s), shape files*

Lake Pūkaki, located approximately 10 kilometers (km) north of Twizel in the Mackenzie Basin, is a modified natural lake and the largest hydroelectricity storage lake in New Zealand. The Pūkaki Dam is situated at the southern end of the lake, where the Pūkaki Canal begins. A detailed description of Lake Pūkaki, the Pūkaki High Dam, the Pūkaki Canal, and associated infrastructure, as well as the existing and surrounding environment, is provided in Section 2.4 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works." Please note that Section 2.4 contains a map of the entire project area. Information on the operating easement and land ownership title is provided in Appendix D of the attached document.

## 2.3 Ineligible activity

*Your referral application must demonstrate that the project does not involve any ineligible activities as defined in Section 5 of the Act. Please consider each ineligible activity below and where relevant, provide the requested details.*

*When providing your response below, where possible, **provide details of any parties involved, the extent of their holding and the activity relevant to their area.***

*Where a project involves an activity that may be the subject of a determination under sections 23 or 24, and you are intending to seek a Ministerial determination for that activity under either section, you must still complete this section in full. Determinations under, and information required in respect of, sections 23 and 24 are covered further under 2.5 Ministerial determinations under sections 23 and 24.*

*If your application relates to certain mining activities below the surface of the land and meets the other relevant criteria under section 5(2) of the Act then an agreement under section 5(1)(a), (b), (j) or (k) may not be required. This should be identified under the relevant questions below, and you must provide the additional information required in respect of section 5(2) under 2.3 Ineligible activity.*

### 2.3.1 Does the project include an activity that would occur on identified Māori land as defined in section 4 of the Act?

☐ Yes – see below ☒ No – proceed to next

a. If yes, please address the following:

i. identify the land involved and the owner(s) of the land.

- ii. Confirm that the activity on the land has been agreed with the owners of the land and provide evidence of the written agreement; or

- A. advise whether it is proposed to seek a determination under section 23 and provide the information under 2.5 Ministerial determinations under sections 23 and 24 below; or
- B. advise whether it is proposed to rely on section 5(2) of the Act and provide the information under 2.3 Ineligible activity below.

**2.3.2** Does the project involve an activity that would occur in a customary marine title area?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Address the following:

- i. Identify the relevant customary marine title area, who the customary marine title group is;
- ii. Provide evidence that written agreement has been obtained from the customary marine title group and provide a copy of the same; **or**
  - A. advise whether it is proposed to rely on section 5(2) of the Act and provide the information under 2.3 Ineligible activity below.

**2.3.3** Does the project involve an activity that would occur in a protected customary rights area?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Address the following:

- i. Identify the protected customary rights area, the group who holds these rights and the nature of the protected customary right(s)
- ii. Explain your proposed activity and identify whether you consider that it would have a less than minor adverse effect on the exercise of the protected customary right(s), and briefly explain why; **or**
- iii. Advise whether you consider that your proposed activity would have a more than minor effect on the exercise of the protected customary right(s), and if so, confirm that the activity has been agreed to in writing by the protected customary rights group and provide a copy of that agreement.

**2.3.4** Does the project involve an activity that would occur on:  
Māori customary land; OR land set apart as a Māori reservation as defined in section 4 of Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993.

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

- 2.3.5** Does the project involve an aquaculture activity or an activity that is incompatible with aquaculture activities that would occur within an aquaculture settlement area (under section 12 of the Māori Commercial Aquaculture Claims Settlement Act 2004); or an area reserved under another Treaty settlement for the aquaculture activities of a particular group?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

- 2.3.6** Provide details of the aquaculture activity or the activity that is incompatible with aquaculture and the location.

Not applicable

- 2.3.7** Provide details of the relevant aquaculture settlement area or Treaty settlement legislation reserving space for aquaculture and include details of the impacted parties or particular group.

Not applicable

- 2.3.8** Provide details on whether or not the applicant is authorised to apply for a coastal permit within the aquaculture settlement area, or area reserved under another Treaty settlement for aquaculture activities, including a copy of any such authorisation.

Not applicable

- 2.3.9** Does the project include an activity that would require an access arrangement under section 61 or 61B of the Crown Minerals Act 1991?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Provide the following information:

- i. what is the activity that would require the access arrangement; and
- ii. does the project include an activity that would occur on Crown owned land or internal waters and land of the common marine and coastal area described in Schedule 4 of that Act and provide details of the same.
- iii. If so describe how the activity meets the criteria in section 61(1A)(a-e) of the Crown Minerals Act 1991; **or**
- iv. Confirm and provide evidence that the project would not occur in an area for which a permit cannot be granted under that Act:

- 2.3.10** Does the project include an activity that would be prevented under any of sections 165J, 165M, 165Q, 165ZC, or 165ZDB (regarding the management of occupation in common marine and coastal area) of the Resource Management Act 1991?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next



- 2.3.11** Provide details about which section the project does not comply with and, if relevant, the provisions of the regional coastal plan that are applicable.

Not applicable

- 2.3.12** Does the project include an activity (other than an activity that would require an access arrangement under the Crown Minerals Act 1991) that would occur on land that is listed in Schedule 4 of this Act?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Provide the following:

- i. identify the activity and which clause under Schedule 4 is applicable; and
- ii. confirm whether you are seeking that the Minister make a determination under section 24, and if so, whether the determination sought relates to existing electricity infrastructure or new electricity lines and provide the information under 2.5 Ministerial determinations under sections 23 and 24 below.

- 2.3.13** Does the project involve an activity that would occur on a national reserve held under the Reserves Act 1977 and requires approval under that Act?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Address the following:

- i. identify the activity and type of national reserve under the Reserves Act
- ii. identify what approval(s) would be required under the Reserves Act.
- iii. Confirm whether you are seeking that the Minister make a determination under section 24 and if so whether the determination sought relates to existing electricity infrastructure or new electricity lines.? If so, provide the information under 2.5 Ministerial determinations under sections 23 and 24 below

- 2.3.14** Does the project involve an activity that would occur on a reserve held under the Reserves Act 1977 that is vested in someone other than the Crown or a local authority?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Address the following:

- i. identify the activity, the reserve type under the Reserves Act, and the person in whom it is vested.
- ii. provide evidence that written agreement has been obtained from the person in whom the reserve is vested and provide a copy of the same; or
- iii. advise whether it is proposed to rely on section 5(2) of the Act and provide the information under 2.3 Ineligible activity below.

**2.3.15** Does the project involve an activity that would occur on a reserve held under the Reserves Act 1977 that is managed by someone other than the Department of Conservation or a local authority?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Address the following:

- i. identify the activity, the reserve type under the Reserves Act, and the person or body who manages the reserve.
- ii. Provide evidence that written agreement has been obtained from the person or body responsible for managing the reserve and provide a copy of the same; **or**
- iii. advise whether it is proposed to rely on section 5(2) of the Act and provide the information under 2.3 Ineligible activity below; **or**
- iv. advise whether you consider the activity falls within the scope of section 5(5) of the Act, and provide the information under 2.3 Ineligible activity below.

**2.3.16** Does the project involve an activity that is:

a. a prohibited activity under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 or regulations made under that Act?

☐ Yes – please explain      ☒ No – proceed next

b. described in section 15B (Discharge of harmful substances from ships or offshore installations) of the Resource Management Act 1991 and is a prohibited activity under that Act or regulations made under it;

☐ Yes – please explain      ☒ No – proceed next

c. prohibited by section 15C (Prohibitions in relation to radioactive waste or other radioactive matter and other waste in coastal marine area) of the Resource Management Act 1991

☐ Yes – please explain      ☒ No – proceed next

**2.3.17** Does the project involve a decommissioning-related activity as described in section 38(3) of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012:

☐ Yes – please explain      ☒ No – proceed next

**2.3.18** Does the project involve an activity undertaken for the purposes of an offshore renewable energy project?

☐ Yes – please explain ☒ No – proceed next

## **2.4 Exemptions from requirement to provide agreement**

### **2.4.1 Mining activities under section 5(2)**

*The agreement of the relevant groups referred to under 3.5 Persons affected is not required for certain mining activities under section 5(2). If you think this might apply to your application, answer the questions below.*

**2.4.1.2** Is your application for an activity that is prospecting, exploration, mining or mining operations of Crown-owned minerals undertaken below the surface of any land or area?

☐ Yes –see below ☒ No – proceed next

**2.4.1.3** Provide details of the activity and identify the owner and occupier of the land and any relevant details concerning the land or area (such as whether it is identified Māori land)

Not applicable

**2.4.1.4** Explain the extent, if any to which your activity may be likely to cause any damage to the surface of the land or any loss or damage to the owner or occupier of the land.

Not applicable

**2.4.1.5** Explain the extent, if any to which your activity will be likely to have any prejudicial effect in respect of the use and enjoyment of the land by the owner or occupier of the land.

Not applicable

**2.4.1.6** Explain the extent, if any to which your activity will be likely to have any prejudicial effect in respect of any possible future use of the surface of the land, and if no such effects are anticipated, please explain why.

Not applicable

### **2.4.2 Activities on land proposed to be the subject of a land exchange**

*The agreement of relevant groups referred to in (subsection 5(1)(a) of the Act) is not required if section 5(5) applies. If you consider this section may be relevant to your application, complete the below.*

**2.4.2.1** Is the reserve on which the activity is to occur proposed to be the subject of a land exchange?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**2.4.2.2** Is the reserve a Crown-owned reserve?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**2.4.2.3** Are the person or persons responsible for managing the reserve in place because of a Treaty settlement?

☐ Yes ☒ No

**2.4.2.4** Provide any supporting details which may be relevant for your responses to the above questions.

Not applicable

## **2.5 Ministerial determinations under sections 23 and 24**

*Complete this section if you wish to seek a ministerial determination under section 23 or section 24 that your project is not an ineligible activity.*

### **2.5.1 Determination in relation to linear infrastructure on Māori land under section 23**

**2.5.1.1** Is your application seeking a determination under section 23 (linear infrastructure on certain identified Māori land)

☐ Yes – see below ☒ No – proceed next

Provide the following information:

**2.5.1.2** Confirmation that the activity is the construction of electricity lines or land transport infrastructure (and identify which it is)

**2.5.1.3** Confirmation that the above construction (or operation of) will be undertaken by a network utility operator that is a requiring authority, and that that same party is the applicant for the necessary approvals, providing details of the same.

**2.5.1.4** Confirmation that the activity would occur on identified Māori land that is Māori freehold land or General land owned by Māori that was previously Māori freehold land (and identify that land)

**2.5.1.5** Provide information on the rights and interests of Māori in that land

- 2.5.1.6** Provide an assessment of the effects of the activity on those Māori rights and interests and on the relevant land.

**2.5.2 Determination in relation to existing electricity infrastructure under section 24(2)**

- 2.5.2.1** Is your application seeking a Ministerial determination under section 24(2) (in relation to maintenance, upgrading, or continued operation of existing electricity infrastructure on certain Schedule 4 land or in a national reserve)

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

Provide the following information:

- 2.5.2.2** Confirmation that the activity is the maintenance, upgrading, or continued operation of existing electricity infrastructure.

- 2.5.2.3** Confirmation that the activity would occur on eligible land, as defined in section 24(3).

- 2.5.2.4** Advise whether the activity would materially increase the scale or adverse effects of the existing electricity infrastructure and provide an explanation of the same.

**2.5.3 Determination in relation to new electricity lines under section 24(4)**

- 2.5.3.1** Is your application seeking a determination under section 24 (the construction and operation of new electricity lines on eligible land (as defined in schedule 4 excluding land classified as a national park or listed in subsections 2, 4, 5(a), 7 or 8 of that schedule)?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

Provide the following information:

- 2.5.3.2** Is the activity the construction and operation of new electricity lines? (provide any necessary details)

Would the activity occur on eligible land (and identify which category of eligible land);

- 2.5.3.3** Provide the requested information for each alternative site considered for the construction and operation of the new electricity lines:

**2.5.3.4** A description of the alternative site.

**2.5.3.5** A statement of the anticipated and known financial cost of undertaking the activity on the alternative site.

**2.5.3.6** A description of the anticipated and known adverse effects of undertaking the activity on the alternative site.

**2.5.3.7** A description of the anticipated and known financial cost and practicality of available measures to avoid, remedy, mitigate, offset, or compensate for the anticipated and known adverse effects of the activity on the alternative site.

**2.5.3.8** A description of any issues (including financial cost) that would make it impractical to undertake the activity on the alternative site.

**2.5.3.9** An assessment of whether it would be reasonable and practical to undertake the activity on the alternative site, considering the matters referred to above.

## **2.6 Appropriateness for fast-track approvals process**

*Here you must explain how the project meets the referral application criteria ([section 22](#)). Please consider and respond where relevant, to each question.*

*If the project is planned to proceed in stages, you must explain how each stage meets the referral application criteria.*

*If a part of the project is proposed as an alternative project, you must explain how each stage meets the referral application criteria,*

**2.6.1** The criteria for accepting a referral application is that the project is an infrastructure or development project that would have significant regional or national benefits. Explain how this project satisfies the criteria:

The project will deliver significant regional and national economic benefits by enhancing electricity supply security and reducing wholesale electricity prices, both on average and during shortages. These improvements are essential for fostering economic growth. For further information, please refer to Section 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

**2.6.2** Explain how referring the project to the fast-track approvals process:

**2.6.2.1** Would facilitate the project, including by enabling it to be processed in a more timely and cost-effective way than under normal processes; and

Referring the project to the fast-track approvals process is essential, as there is currently no statutory pathway to lower Lake Pūkaki levels below 518 mRL without third-party intervention, due to its classification as a prohibited activity under the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Regional Plan (WAP). Fast-tracking is crucial to address the issues experienced in Winter 2024, enhance market planning, and fully utilise the generation capacity of Lake Pūkaki and the connecting Waitaki Power Scheme. This will ultimately improve customer outcomes and stabilise electricity prices. For further information, please refer to Section 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

**2.6.2.2 Is unlikely to materially affect the efficient operation of the fast-track approvals process**

The project is unlikely to disrupt the fast-track approvals process. The temporary consent for eased access to contingent storage is specific and time-bound, ensuring a streamlined review. Additionally, the permanent rock armoring consent will proceed smoothly due to Meridian's detailed construction methodology, which mitigates potential environmental impacts. For further information, please refer to Section 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

**2.6.2.3 Has the project been identified as a priority project in a central government, local government, or sector plan or strategy (for example, in a general policy statement or spatial strategy), or a central government infrastructure priority list?**

*For example – a sector plan that specifically identifies the project including details such as location.*

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

a. Identify the plan, strategy or list (or any other relevant document).

**2.6.2.4 Will the project deliver new regionally or nationally significant infrastructure or enable the continued functioning of existing regionally or nationally significant infrastructure?**

☒ Yes – see below      ☐ No – proceed next

a. Explain how the project will deliver this.

During periods of potential electricity shortage, operating Lake Pūkaki between 518 mRL and 513 mRL and utilising the additional stored water can provide approximately 546 GWh of reliable energy. This is equivalent to the entire annual output of Meridian's new 176 MW Harapaki wind farm or the annual electricity consumption of 75,000 average New Zealand households. For further information, please refer to Section 2.2 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

**2.6.2.5 Will the project increase the supply of housing, address housing needs, or contribute to a well-functioning urban environment (within the meaning of policy 1 of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020). If yes, explain how the project will achieve this.**

Not applicable

**2.6.2.6 Will the project deliver significant economic benefits, and if so, how?**

The project will deliver significant regional and national economic benefits by enhancing electricity supply security and lowering wholesale electricity prices on average and during shortage, which are essential for economic growth. It will result in lower wholesale prices, with an average reduction of \$11/MWh or 7%, and lower price volatility in the market. Additionally, it will lower overall costs to electricity consumers by \$527 million per annum, totaling \$1.58 billion over 2025-2027. For further information, please refer to Sections 2.2 and 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

**2.6.2.7 Will the project support primary industries, including aquaculture, and if so,**

how?

Providing a consistent and dependable power source to businesses and industries reduces the risk of outages and price spikes, preventing operational disruptions, financial losses, and productivity difficulties. Furthermore, a lower price and secure electricity supply supports the development of new businesses and industries, attracting investment and creating jobs. For further information, please refer to Section 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

**2.6.2.8 Will the project support development of natural resources, including minerals and petroleum, and if so, how?**

Not applicable

**2.6.2.9 Will the project support climate change mitigation, including the reduction or removal of greenhouse gas emissions, and if so, how?**

The project will also support climate change mitigation by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by - 224 kT CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per annum. By increasing the availability of hydroelectric power, the project will reduce New Zealand's reliance on coal generation, diesel power and thermal generation during energy shortage periods. For further information, please refer to Section 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."



**2.6.2.10** Will the project support climate change adaptation, reduce risks arising from natural hazards, or support recovery from events caused by natural hazards, and if so, how?

Not applicable

**2.6.2.11** Will the project address significant environmental issues, and if so, how?

not applicable

**2.6.2.12** Is the project consistent with local or regional planning documents, including spatial strategies, and if so, how?

The project has been assessed as being consistent with aspects of the local and regional planning documents particularly the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement, the Canterbury Land and Water Plan Regional Plan, the Canterbury Air Regional Plan and the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Plan (WAP). Specifically, it will support the social and economic well-being of communities by enhancing the security of electricity supply while ensuring that adverse environmental impacts are properly mitigated. For further information refer to section 2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

## Section 3: Project details

*Remember: at this stage only a general level of detail is required, enough to inform eligibility to use the fast-track approvals process.*

For construction activities, please state the anticipated commencement and completion dates.

Protective rip-rap will be installed on the upstream face of the Pūkaki Dam and its left and right abutments. If low lake levels occur, this work is expected to begin in early winter 2025. If low levels do not occur or a consent is not in place for the winter of 2025, construction will be deferred to future years. The rock armoring works are estimated to take 10-12 weeks. For further information, please refer to Section 2.2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

### 3.1 Approvals required

*Applications must specify all of the proposed approvals sought but only need to provide a general level of detail about each proposed approval, sufficient to inform the Minister's decision on the referral application.*

*For each proposed approval an applicant must be eligible to apply for any corresponding approval under a specified Act. For example, if an approval is for a notice of requirement under the RMA, the applicant for that approval would need to be a requiring authority.*

*Applications for approvals under a specified Act, as required by in [section 13\(4\)\(y\)](#), are covered below in 3.8 Specific proposed approvals.*

#### 3.1.1 Outline the approvals sought under the Resource Management Act 1991.

Consents required are detailed in section 2.5 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

Overall, consent is sought for the following activities:

1. The take, use, dam, or divert water from Lake Pūkaki below the minimum lake level of 518 mRL as a prohibited activity under Rule 12 of the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Plan.
2. The discharge of water or contaminants into surface water under Rule 5.100 of the Canterbury Regional Land and Water Plan as a discretionary activity.
3. The extraction of gravel from the bed of a lake including the deposition of substances, excavation or other disturbance of the bed of a lake under Rule 5.150 Canterbury Regional Land and Water Plan as a discretionary activity.
4. The discharge of dust into air cannot meet the permitted activity under Rule 7.5 of the Canterbury Air Regional Plan as a non complying activity.

**3.1.2** Outline the approvals sought under the Conservation Act 1987

Not applicable

**3.1.3** Outline the approvals sought under the Reserves Act 1977

Not applicable

**3.1.4** Outline the approvals sought under the Wildlife Act 1953

Not applicable

- 3.1.5** Outline the approvals sought under the National Parks Act 1980  
Not applicable
- 3.1.6** Outline the approvals sought under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014  
Not applicable
- 3.1.7** Outline the approvals sought under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983  
Not applicable
- 3.1.8** Outline the approvals sought under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012  
Not applicable
- 3.1.9** Outline the approvals sought under the Crown Minerals Act 1991  
Not applicable
- 3.1.10** Outline the approvals sought under the Public Works Act 1981  
Not applicable
- 3.1.11** *Only applicable if more than one applicant:* Provide a statement of which approvals are proposed to be held by which applicant.  
There is not more than one applicant
- 3.1.12** Where there are any particular eligibility requirements to apply for an above approval; identify what they are, who the relevant applicant is, and confirm that the relevant applicant meets those requirements (including providing any necessary supporting information or documentation to evidence this).  
Not applicable
- 3.1.13** Are there any other types of consents, certificates, designations, concessions, and other legal authorisations (other than contractual authorisations or the proposed approvals) and you consider are needed to authorise the project (including any that may be needed by someone other than you as the applicant(s)). Provide details on whether these have been obtained.  
  
Other than the consents identified as being required within this application, there are no other types of consents, certificates, designations, concessions, and other legal authorisations needed to authorise the Project.

## **3.2 Project stages**

- 3.2.1** If the project is planned to proceed in stages, provide:

1. A statement of whether the project is planned to proceed in stages, including:
  - a. an outline of the nature, scale and timing of the stages; and
  - b. a statement of whether you intend to lodge a separate substantive application for each of the stages.
    - i. If a substantive application is intended to be lodged for each stage, address the questions under the section (Appropriateness for fast-track approvals process) for each stage of the project

The project will not be undertaken in stage. Nevertheless, a construction methodology schedule and sequence plan is detained in section 2.2.3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

### 3.3 Alternative project

#### 3.3.1 If the project is proposed as an alternative project, provide:

1. A statement of whether a part of the project is proposed as an alternative project in itself; and
  - a. Describe that part of the project; and
  - b. Explain how that part of the project proposed as an alternative project meets the referral assessment criteria in section 22 of the Act.

Not applicable

### 3.4 Adverse effects

#### 3.4.1 Describe any anticipated and known adverse effects of the project on the environment.

Meridian engaged technical experts to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposal. Due to the detailed information provided on these effects, please refer to section 2.9 and Appendix E of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works" for further information

#### 3.4.2 Provide a statement of any activities involved in the project that are prohibited activities under the Resource Management Act 1991, and identify the relevant prohibited activity provision.

The taking, use, damming, or diverting of water from Lake Pūkaki below the minimum lake level of 518 mRL is a prohibited activity under Rule 12 of the Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Plan. For further information, please refer to Section 2.5.1 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

### 3.5 Persons affected

#### 3.5.1 Provide a list of the persons, groups and/or entities who you consider are likely to be affected by the project.

*The list should include, as relevant, local authorities, relevant Māori groups (as set out at section 13(4)(j)(ii)-(vii) of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024), persons with a registered interest in land that may need to be acquired under the Public Works Act 198; and if the project includes a land exchange, the holder of an interest in the land that is to be exchanged by the Crown (see Consultation requirements for referral application).*

A list of potentially affected parties is detailed in section 2.7 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

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- 3.5.2** Provide a summary of any consultation undertaken with the above persons and/or groups who you consider are likely to be affected by the project, and any other groups required to be consulted with under section 11 of the Act, and how the consultation has informed the project.

Meridian has initiated consultation with Canterbury Regional Council (ECan), MacKenzie District Council (MDC), Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) and Ngāi Tahu prior to lodging this application. A summary of this engagement is detailed in section 2.6 and Appendix E of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

- 3.5.3** List any Treaty settlements that apply to the project area and provide a summary of the relevant principles and provisions in those settlements.

Lake Pūkaki is a statutory acknowledgment area identified in the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. Further information, including a summary of the relevant principles and provisions in the Settlement Act, is detailed in Section 2.8 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

- 3.5.4** If relevant, detail any principles or provisions in the Ngā Rohe Moana o Ngā Hapū o Ngāti Porou Act 2019 that would be invoked by the project and identify which aspects of the application trigger or otherwise invoke these requirements.

Not applicable

- 3.5.5** Will the project be located on land returned under a Treaty settlement?

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

- 3.5.6** Provide evidence of written agreement by the owners of the land returned.

Not applicable

- 3.5.7** Describe any processes already undertaken under the Public Works Act 1981 in relation to the project:

Not applicable

- 3.5.8** Provide information identifying any parcels of Māori land, marae, or identified wāhi tapu within the project area:

Within the Mackenzie District Plan, Lake Pūkaki is identified as being within an Area of Significance to Māori (ID: SASM17, SASM76 and SASM79).

## 3.6 Legal interests

- 3.6.1** Provide a description of any legal interests you or any others applying, have in the land on which the project will occur, including a statement of how that affects your ability to undertake the work.

Meridian owns land and the bed of Lake Pūkaki in the vicinity of and including the Pūkaki Dam and holds an easement in gross over the bed and margin of the remainder of the lake (operating easement granted by Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)). Titles and the Operating Easement are included in Appendix D of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works."

## 3.7 Other matters

- 3.7.1** Have any activities included in the project, or any that are substantially the same as those involved in the project, previously been the subject of an application or a decision under a specified Act?

Please note the term 'application' includes a notice of requirement and any other means by which a decision may be sought under a specified Act.

☐ Yes – see below      ☒ No – proceed next

**3.7.2** If an application has been made, provide details of the application.

**3.7.3** If a decision has been made, also provide the outcome of the decision and the reasons for it.

**3.7.4** Provide a description of whether and how the project would be affected by climate change and natural hazards:

Given the short duration of the proposed activity (2025, 2026 and 2027), the impact of climate change is expected to be negligible.

*Provide the additional details requested below as relevant to your application.*

### **3.8 Specific proposed approvals**

#### **3.8.1 Approvals under the Resource Management Act 1991**

##### **3.8.1.1 Resource consents**

If your application is seeking a consent for an activity that would otherwise be applied for under the Resource Management Act 1991, including an activity that is prohibited under the Act, provide the information below:

- An assessment of the project against any relevant national policy statement, any relevant national environmental standards and, if relevant, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.

The proposed activity subject to this application has been assessed against the relevant national policy statements and national environmental standards. This assessment is provided in Section 3 of the attached document titled "Lake Pūkaki Hydro Storage and Dam Resilience Works".

- Information on whether, to the best of your knowledge, there are any existing resource consents relevant to the project site to which RMA section 124C(1)(c) (existing consent would need to expire to enable the approval to be exercised) or RMA section 165Z1 (space already occupied by the holder of an aquaculture permit) would apply if the approval were to be applied for as a resource consent under that Act

Not applicable

##### **3.8.1.2 Resource consents where the project includes standard freshwater fisheries activities**

If your application is seeking a resource consent and your project includes a standard freshwater fisheries activity, provide the information requested below:

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- If an in-stream structure is proposed (including formal notification of any dam or diversion structure), provide a description of the extent to which this may impede fish passage.
- Indicate whether any fish salvage activities or other complex freshwater fisheries activities are proposed.

### **3.8.1.3** *Designations*

If your application is seeking a designation or an alteration to an existing designation for which a notice of requirement would otherwise be lodged under the Resource Management Act 1991, provide the information below:

- An assessment of the project against any relevant national policy statement, any relevant national environmental standards, or, if relevant, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement.

### **3.8.1.4** *Designations where the project includes a standard freshwater fisheries activity*

If your application is seeking a designation or an alteration to an existing designation and your project includes a standard freshwater fisheries activity, provide the information requested below:

- If an in-stream structure is proposed (including formal notification of any dam or diversion structure), provide a description of the extent to which this may impede fish passage.
- Indicate whether any fish salvage activities or other complex freshwater fisheries activities are proposed.

### **3.8.1.5** *Change or cancellation of conditions*

If your application is seeking a change or cancellation of resource consent condition that would otherwise be applied for under the Resource Management Act 1991, provide:

- Information about whether the change or cancellation of the condition is material to the implementation or delivery of the project.

### **3.8.1.6** *Certificates of compliance*

If your application is seeking a certificate of compliance that would otherwise be applied for under the Resource Management Act 1991, provide:

information that demonstrates the activity that the certificate of compliance is intended to cover can be done lawfully in the location without a resource consent.



### **3.8.2 Approvals relating to Conservation Act 1987, Reserves Act 1977, Wildlife Act 1953, and National Parks Act 1980**

#### **3.8.2.1 Concessions**

For applications seeking a concession that include a lease, answer the following:

- Will the lease be for a term (including any renewals that will, or is likely to, be more than 50 years?)  
☐ Yes – see below   ☐ No – proceed next
- Will the granting of the lease trigger a right of first refusal or a right of offer or return?  
☐ Yes – see below   ☐ No – proceed next
  - If you answered yes to both a. and b. above, provide evidence that the applicant has written agreement from the holder(s) of the right of first refusal or right of offer or return to waive that right for the purposes of the proposed lease.

#### **3.8.2.2 Land exchanges**

For applications seeking an approval for a land exchange involving conservation land, provide the details below:

- A description of both land areas proposed for exchange (for example, maps showing areas and location, addresses and legal descriptions where possible)
- The financial value of the land proposed to be acquired by the Crown
- A brief description of the conservation values of both pieces of land, including an explanation of why the exchange would benefit the conservation estate.
- If the land exchange would trigger a right of first refusal or a right of offer or return, provide evidence that the applicant has written agreement from the holder of the right of first refusal or right of offer or return to waive that right for the purpose of the land exchange
- Provide sufficient detail in respect of both land areas to confirm that no part of any land to be exchanged by the Crown is land listed in Schedule 4 or a reserve declared to be a national reserve under section 13 of the Reserves Act 1977.

### **3.8.3 Approvals relating to complex Freshwater Fisheries activities**

If your application is seeking an approval or dispensation that would otherwise be applied for under regulation 42 or 43 of the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983 in respect of a complex freshwater fisheries activity provide the information requested below:

- Whether an in-stream structure is proposed (including formal notification of any dam or diversion structure), and a description of the extent to which this may impede fish passage.
- Whether any fish salvage activities or other complex freshwater fisheries activities are proposed.

### **3.8.4 Approvals relating to Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012**

If your application is seeking a marine consent that would otherwise be applied for under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf Act 2012, provide the information requested below:

- Any information relating to whether the Minister for Conservation is an affected person.
- If the applicant or the proposed holder of the marine consent has already applied for a consent under the EEZ Act in relation to the project, provide:
  - Details of any application made;
  - An explanation of any decisions made on that application; and
  - Any information that Minister may consider under section 22(6) (comparison of activity against current or likely use of the area).
- Additional information (in a summary form) about compliance or enforcement action taken against the applicant or the person who is identified in the application as the proposed holder of the marine consent by the EPA under the EEZ Act.

### **3.8.5 Approvals relating to Crown Minerals Act 1991**

#### **3.8.5.1 Access arrangements**

For an approval for an access arrangement that would otherwise be applied for under section 61 or 61B of the Crown Minerals Act 1991, provide:

- Information that confirms the applicant or the person identified in the application as the proposed holder of the access arrangement complies with section 59(1) and (2) of the Crown Minerals Act 1991 (which applies as if a reference to an access arrangement under that Act were a reference to an access arrangement under this Act) including;
  - Evidence that the applicant or person has provided each owner and occupier of the relevant land a notice in writing of their intention to obtain an access arrangement; and

- Evidence that the notice complies with the requirements in section 59(2) of the Crown Minerals Act, and any matters required by regulations. =

### **3.8.5.2 Mining permits**

For an approval for a mining permit that would otherwise be applied for under section 23A of the Crown Minerals Act 1991, provide the information requested below:

- A copy of the relevant exploration permit or existing privilege to be exchanged for a mining permit that entitles the holder to mine a Crown-owned mineral.
- The name and contact details of the proposed permit participants and the proposed permit operator.
- A proposed work programme for the proposed permit, which may comprise committed work, committed or contingent work, or both.
- Evidence of the technical or financial capability of the proposed permit holder to comply with and give proper effect to the work programme.
- Information about the proposed permit holder's history of compliance with mining or similar permits and their conditions.
- The proposed date on which the substantive application is intended to be lodged (if your referral application is accepted) in accordance with section 42(11).
- If the authorised person proposes to provide information under section 37 (to the relevant chief executive), the date on which the person intends to provide that information.
- The proposed duration of the permit.

### **3.8.5.3 Mining permits for petroleum**

If the proposed approvals include a mining permit for petroleum, provide:

- A map of the area over which the mining permit application is intended to be made, the area in which the surrender of an exploration permit or existing privileges is proposed (which must be the same area as the area over which the mining permit application is intended to be made), and the extent of the resource and reserves to which the development plan relates.

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- The resources and reserves relating to the project, estimated in accordance with the Petroleum Resources Management System.
- A high-level overview of the following:
  - the proposed field development plan;
  - the proposed date for the commencement of petroleum production;
  - the economic model for the project;
  - the proposed duration of the proposed mining permit and;
  - decommissioning plans.

**3.8.5.4 Mining permits for minerals other than petroleum**

If the proposed approvals include a mining permit for minerals other than petroleum, provide:

- A map of the area over which the mining permit application is intended to be made, the area in which the surrender of an exploration permit or existing privileges is proposed (which must be the same area as the area over which the mining permit application is intended to be made), and the extent of the resource and reserves to which the development plan relates.
- For minerals other than gold or silver, a report or statement confirming the ownership of the minerals targeted
- Information on whether the application will be for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 permit.
- An estimate of the mineral resources and reserves relating to the project, including a summary on acquisition of the data and the data underpinning the estimate (such as information on sample locations, grade, and geology). For a Tier 1 permit application the resources and reserves relating to the project are to be estimated in accordance with a recognised reporting code such as JORC or NI 43-101.
- An indicative mine plan.
- A high-level overview of the following:
  - the proposed mining method;
  - the proposed date for the commencement of mining and estimated annual production;
  - the economic model for the project;
  - the status of or anticipated timing for completing any pre-feasibility or feasibility studies;
  - the proposed methods for processing mined material and handling and treating waste and;
  - anticipated plans for mine closure and rehabilitation.

## Section 4: Authorisation

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is true and correct.

- ☒ I confirm that I am authorised to make this application.
- ☒ I have provided a copy of the application with all contact details redacted.
- ☒ I understand that all actual and reasonable costs incurred in relation to this application by MfE, EPA and other central and local government agencies will be recovered from me in accordance with section 104 of the Act, and the Fast-track Approvals Cost Recovery Regulations 2025.

Signature:



Date: 17/04/2025

Name: Kate Berkett

## Section 5: Attachments

List any documents submitted with the application.

- Remember: include a copy of your application with all contact details redacted.

[illegible]



# Referral application checklist

Use this checklist to confirm you have completed all sections of the referral application form.

<b>Section 1: Applicant details</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.2 & 1.3 Agent's evidence of authority to represent the applicant(s) - if applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.4 Compliance and enforcement history	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section 2: Referral application summary</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.1 Project name	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.2 Project description and location	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.3 Ineligible activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.4 Exemptions from requirement to provide agreement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.5 Ministerial determinations under sections 23 and 24	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.6 Appropriateness for fast-track approvals process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section 3: Project details</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.1 Approvals required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.2 Project stages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.3 Alternative project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.4 Adverse effects	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.5 Persons affected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.6 Legal interest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.7 Other matters	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3.8 Specific proposed approvals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section 4: Authorisation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Section 5: Attachments</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>